



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Underground Storage Tanks- UST, LUST, ELTF

www.idem.IN.gov

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Description:

- Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) are tanks and any underground piping connected to the tank that has at least 10% of its combined volume underground.
- USTs are generally made from steel or fiberglass and are meant to hold regulated substances such as petroleum products or hazardous substances.
- Faulty installation, corrosion or inadequate operating maintenance procedures can cause USTs to release their contents into the environment, thus becoming Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUSTs).
- The Excess Liability Trust Fund (ELTF) provides a mechanism for the reimbursement of monies spent by UST owners and operators for the cleanup of petroleum released from LUSTs.
- The ELTF is funded by tank fees paid by owners/operators of USTs and acts as a means of providing financial assurance and compensation to third parties affected by leaks.

Environmental Impacts:

- Until the mid-1980s, most USTs were made of bare steel, which is prone to corrode over time and allow UST contents to leak into the environment.
- Faulty installation or inadequate operating maintenance procedures can also cause USTs to release their contents into the environment.
- The greatest potential hazard from a LUST is that the petroleum or other hazardous substance can seep into the soil, causing contamination of groundwater, the source of drinking water for nearly half of all Indiana.
- Occasionally, the spilled product finds its way into surface water, sewer systems private drinking water wells or can enter buildings as a vapor (vapor intrusion).
- LUSTs can also present other health and environmental risks, including potential for fire and explosion.
- Once any release is discovered, the owner and/or operator of the tank must report the release to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), and the UST enters the LUST program.
- The owner/operator of a LUST must also mitigate any immediate threats, investigate the extent of contamination in the soil and ground water and implement a plan to clean up the contamination.

IDEM's Role:

- IDEM is committed to protecting Indiana's environment and public health in a responsible manner. In accordance with this goal, IDEM regulates USTs that contain petroleum products and industrial chemicals in excess of one-hundred-ten (110) gallons.



- IDEM's regulates USTs owned/operated by both businesses and private individuals who use tanks solely for their own need. Some heating oil tanks are exempted.
- Over a ten-year period, all operating USTs were required to be closed or upgraded. Upgrade requirements included three (3) systems to prevent or detect a release: Corrosion prevention (for steel USTs), spill and overfill prevention and leak detection. More recent requirements include secondary containments and double-lined piping.
- When product is detected outside the tank or the tank exhibits unusual operating conditions, tank owners and operators must report suspected and confirmed releases to IDEM and stop the leak within twenty-four (24) hours. All LUSTs, whether or not they are regulated USTs, require an investigation and possible cleanup.
- Federal and state regulations require that owners/operators of regulated USTs demonstrate financial assurance for potential costs of remediation of environmental damage and compensation of third parties should a leak occur.
- The ELTF helps eligible owners/operators of regulated USTs with financial assurance costs which could range anywhere from thousands to millions of dollars.
- IDEM is responsible for receiving and reviewing reimbursement claims for payments from ELTF for investigation of spills and implementation of clean-up.
- IDEM's ELTF program is also responsible for educating and assisting UST owners/operators and consultants regarding ELTF issues.

Citizen's Role:

- In the State of Indiana, citizens play a vital role in protecting Indiana's environment and can contact IDEM with any questions, comments or concerns. Citizens are encouraged to contact IDEM if they find orphaned or abandoned USTs or LUSTs.

More Information:

- A suspected or confirmed release must be reported within twenty-four (24) hours. If a release is from an unregulated tank, report the release to the Spill Line, (317) 233-7745 or (888) 233-7745.
- For more information on Underground Storage Tanks, visit IDEM's UST page on the Web at: <http://www.in.gov/idem/programs/land/ust/> or call the UST Section Chief at (317) 308-3039.
- To view the regulations regarding USTs, see 329 IAC 9.
- For information on IDEM's Excess Liability Trust Fund and reimbursement of eligible clean up and compensation expenses, visit IDEM's ELTF page on the Web at: <http://www.in.gov/idem/programs/land/eltf/index.html>.
- For information about IDEM's Risk Integrated System of Closure (RISC) visit our Web page at: <http://www.in.gov/idem/programs/land/risc/>.

